



OP6500

Operational Art and Campaign Planning

JOINT ADVANCED WARFIGHTING SCHOOL (JAWS)

Case Study

Horatio Nelson and the 1798 Mediterranean Campaign



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January 2006

Report Documentation Page				Form Approved OMB No. 0704-0188	
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1. REPORT DATE JAN 2006		2. REPORT TYPE		3. DATES COVERED 00-00-2006 to 00-00-2006	
4. TITLE AND SUBTITLE Horatio Nelson and the 1798 Mediterranean Campaign				5a. CONTRACT NUMBER	
				5b. GRANT NUMBER	
				5c. PROGRAM ELEMENT NUMBER	
6. AUTHOR(S)				5d. PROJECT NUMBER	
				5e. TASK NUMBER	
				5f. WORK UNIT NUMBER	
7. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES) National Defense University, Joint Forces Staff College, 7800 Hampton Blvd, Norfolk, VA				8. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION REPORT NUMBER	
9. SPONSORING/MONITORING AGENCY NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES)				10. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S ACRONYM(S)	
				11. SPONSOR/MONITOR'S REPORT NUMBER(S)	
12. DISTRIBUTION/AVAILABILITY STATEMENT Approved for public release; distribution unlimited					
13. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES					
14. ABSTRACT					
15. SUBJECT TERMS					
16. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF:			17. LIMITATION OF ABSTRACT Same as Report (SAR)	18. NUMBER OF PAGES 29	19a. NAME OF RESPONSIBLE PERSON
a. REPORT unclassified	b. ABSTRACT unclassified	c. THIS PAGE unclassified			

Letters and Dispatches of Horatio Nelson

The 1798 Mediterranean Campaign (June 12th to 29th, 1798)



Horatio Nelson's dispatches and letters are based directly on the original nineteenth century editions. Nelson, who died at the naval battle of Trafalgar on October 21, 1805, was one of the most successful and famous of British fleet commanders. He fought in numerous battles, on both land and at sea, always leading the fight and pushing ahead into the enemy. His best acquaintances acknowledged that Nelson had an unusually clear mind, a keen intellect, and an insatiable thirst for glory. The original dispatches include lengthy footnotes, some of which have been selectively included. The "NELSON AND BRONTE" signature which end the later passages refer to Nelson's status as Duke of Bronte. Dates preceded by names *Theseus*, *Captain*, *Vanguard* or *Victory* are referring to Nelson's flagships, from whence he wrote many of his orders and dispatches.

In Aboukir Bay on 1 August 1798, Rear Admiral Horatio Nelson achieved one of the most decisive victories in the age of sail and re-established British command of the Mediterranean. With a fleet of fourteen ships, he captured six and destroyed seven French vessels out of a total of seventeen. Since May 1798 Nelson had been searching for the French fleet. The French force sailed from Toulon in May, escorting the transports of General Napoleon Bonaparte's army to Egypt. Nelson's arrival ended eighteen months without a British presence in the Mediterranean. It was a risky venture since the Home Fleet was left without a reserve but the government hoped a victory would cause Austria to

declare war on France.

The French position in Aboukir Bay appeared a very strong one with the ships anchored parallel to the shore. The French commander Admiral Brueys hoped that any attackers would have to approach his ships head on while the French vessels could fire broadsides. However, there were wide gaps between the ships and none of the four French frigates were employed on scouting duties so Nelson's fleet achieved complete surprise at 1430 on 1 August.

Nelson's thirteen 74 gun ships and one 50 gun vessel were in theory outnumbered by Brueys' 120 gun flagship, three 80 gun ships and nine 74s plus four frigates. But five British ships led by Captain Thomas Foley in HMS Goliath passed between the leading French vessel and the shallow waters to engage the enemy from the landward side. This proved to be the key moment. With the remainder of Nelson's line sailing down the seaward side, eight French ships of the line were engaged by thirteen British ones.

The fighting was fierce and Nelson himself was hit in the forehead. At 2200 the magazine of the 120 gun French flagship L'Orient blew up in a massive explosion. By this time the French line was in complete disarray and Nelson ordered the last four French ships of the line to be engaged; two escaped with two frigates whilst the other two were captured.

The British suffered 218 killed and 677 wounded. French losses were far worse with an estimated 5225 men killed, wounded and captured. Napoleon's army in Egypt was cut off and forced to surrender by a British force in 1801, although its illustrious commander had returned to France in 1799. France's enemies were much encouraged by the great victory and the victor himself became Baron Nelson of the Nile.

TO HIS EXCELLENCY SIR WILLIAM HAMILTON, K.B.

Vanguard, off Elba, June 12th, 1798.

My dear Sir,

If the Transfer Sloop of War has arrived at Naples, you will know that the British Fleet is in the Mediterranean, and that I have the honour of commanding it. It has been a misfortune that a Fleet was not ordered a fortnight sooner; but, no blame attaches itself anywhere, and from Sir Roger Curtis' junction with Lord St. Vincent, we are much sooner on the Coast of Italy than could have been expected. But I hope we are in good time to save Naples or Sicily from falling into the hands of the Enemy. I beg you will assure the King and Queen of Naples that I will not lose one moment in fighting the French Fleet, and that no person can have a more ardent desire of serving them and of fulfilling the orders of the good and great King our Master. As I am not quite clear, from General Acton's Letters to you of April 3rd and 9th, what co-operation is intended by the Court of Naples, I wish to know perfectly what is to be expected, that I may regulate my movements accordingly, and beg clear answers to the following questions and requisitions:—

Are the Ports of Naples and Sicily open to his Majesty's Fleet? have the Governors orders for our free admission? and for us to be supplied with whatever we may want?

If it is convenient, I much wish for some Frigates and other fast-sailing Vessels, for, by a fatality all mine have left me. I want information of the French Fleet; for I hope they have passed Naples. I want good Pilots—say six or eight, for the Coast of Sicily, the Adriatic, or for whatever place the Enemy's Fleet may be at; for I mean to follow them if they go to the Black Sea. As the 12,000 men had not sailed from Genoa on the 2nd of June, nor, indeed, were they all embarked, I trust, if the French are landed in the Neapolitan territory, that the Kingdom will not be lost in a few days, for I again repeat, that when it is considered that the orders for a Fleet to go into the Mediterranean were only dated May 2nd, and that Sir R. Curtis only came in sight of Lord St. Vincent on May the 24th, on which moment Captain Troubridge was sent away with the Detachment to join me off Cape Sicie, that the British Fleet is much sooner on the Coast of Italy than could have been expected at this season of the year.

I trust to your Excellency's goodness in impressing General Acton with a favourable opinion of my zeal in our Master's service, and although, I most readily admit that many more able Sea-Officers might have been selected for this service, yet one more anxious to approve himself a faithful servant to his King is not to be met with, than your Excellency's most obedient Servant,

HORATIO NELSON.

TO ADMIRAL THE EARL OF ST. VINCENT, K.B.

12th of June, 1798.

As I see no immediate prospect of a Letter, I shall continue my private one in form of a Diary, which may not be unpleasant to refer to: therefore to begin. Being so close to the Enemy, I take the liberty of keeping Orion for a few days. Owing to want of wind, I did not pass Cape Corse until this morning; at four we were becalmed. The moment we had passed, I sent the Mutine to look into Telamon Bay, which, as all the French troops had not left Genoa on the 6th, I thought a probable place for the rendezvous of a large Fleet; and went with the Squadron between Monte Christi, and Giulio, keeping the Continent close on board.

13th of June.—Mutine joined; nothing in Telamon Bay. I then ran the Fleet between Plenosa and Elba, and Monte Christi; and on the 14th at noon, am now off Civita Vecchia; spoke a Tunisian cruiser, who reported he had spoke a Greek, on the 10th, who told him, that on the 4th, he had passed through the French fleet, of about 200 Sail, as he thought, off the N.W. end of Sicily, steering to the eastward. Am in anxious expectation of meeting with Dispatch-boats, Neapolitan cruisers, &c., with letters for me from Naples giving me information

15th of June.—Off the Ponza Islands; my hopes of information were vain. Not finding a Cruiser, I shall send Troubridge into Naples, in the Mutine, to talk with Sir William Hamilton and General Acton. Troubridge possesses my full confidence, and has been my honoured acquaintance of twenty-five years' standing. I only beg that your Lordship will believe, I shall endeavour to prove myself worthy of your selection of me for this highly honourable Command. Not a moment shall be lost in pursuing the Enemy. I am, &c.,

HORATIO NELSON.

TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE SIR WILLIAM HAMILTON, K.B.

Vanguard, off Civita Vecchia, 14th June, 1798.

My dear Sir,

I have heard by a Vessel just spoke with, that the French Fleet were seen off the north End of Sicily, steering to the eastward, on the 4th of June. If they mean an attack on Sicily, I hope by this time they have barely made a landing, for if their Fleet is not moored in as strong a Port as Toulon, nothing shall hinder me from attacking them; and, with the blessing of Almighty God, I hope for a most glorious victory I send Captain Troubridge to communicate with your Excellency, and, as Captain Troubridge is in full possession of my confidence, I beg that whatever he says may be considered as coming from me. Captain Troubridge is my honoured acquaintance of twenty-five years, and the very best Sea-

Officer in His Majesty's Service. I hope, Pilots will be with us in a few hours; for I will not lose one moment after the Brig's return, to wait for anything. Believe me your Excellency's most obedient servant,

HORATIO NELSON.

TO EARL SPENCER.

Vanguard, off the Island of Ponza, [15th June, 1798.]

My Lord,

Not having received orders from my Commander-in-Chief to correspond with the Secretary of the Admiralty, I do not feel myself at perfect liberty to do it, unless on extraordinary occasions, when I shall send copies of my Letters to Lord St. Vincent; but as your Lordships must be anxious to hear of us, I take the liberty of acquainting you that Captain Troubridge joined on the 7th, but it was the 12th before we passed Cape Corse. The last account I had of the French Fleet, was from a Tunisian Cruizer, who saw them on the 4th, off Trapani, in Sicily, steering to the eastward. If they pass Sicily, I shall believe they are going on their scheme of possessing Alexandria, and getting troops to India—a plan concerted with Tippoo Saib, by no means so difficult as might at first view be imagined; but be they bound to the Antipodes, your Lordship may rely that I will not lose a moment in bringing them to Action, and endeavour to destroy their Transports. I shall send Captain Troubridge on shore to talk with General Acton, and I hope the King of Naples will send me some Frigates; for mine parted company on the 20th of May, and have not joined me since. The whole Squadron is remarkably healthy, and perfectly equal to meet the French Fleet. As I send this before I receive accounts from Naples, it is not in my power to say anything more of the Enemy, for I shall make sail and pass the Faro of Messina the moment Captain -Troubridge returns.

Highly honoured as I feel with this very important command, I beg you will believe that I shall endeavour to approve myself worthy of it, and that I am, with the highest respect,

Your Lordship's most obedient servant,

HORATIO NELSON.

I have taken the liberty of enclosing a letter for Lady Nelson, which I beg your Lordship will have the goodness to order to be sent to her.

TO ADMIRAL THE EARL OF ST. VINCENT, K.B.

Vanguard, off the Islands of Ponza, June 15th, 1798.

My Lord,

I have the honour to acquaint you of my arrival here with the whole Line-of-Battle Ships, the Fifty, and Brig, all in the most perfect health. I am sending Captain Troubridge in the Mutine to see Sir William Hamilton and General Acton, and to get accounts of the French Fleet. I shall lay with the Squadron off Ischia till Captain Troubridge's return, when not a moment shall be lost in pursuing the Enemy, and bringing them to Action. With the highest respect, believe me, your Lordship's most obedient servant,

HORATIO NELSON

TO ADMIRAL THE EARL OF ST. VINCENT, K.B.

Vanguard, off Naples, 17th June, 1798.

My Lord,

I have only to assure you, I will bring the French Fleet to Action the moment I can lay my hands on them. Till then, Adieu. Believe me, &c.

HORATIO NELSON.

TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE SIR WILLIAM HAMILTON, K.B.

Vanguard, Naples Bay, eleven o'clock, 17th June.

My dear Sir,

Your Letter by the Boat yesterday did not come to me, but I am just favoured with yours of yesterday. Captain Troubridge will say everything I could put in a ream of paper. I have only to observe, in my present state, if I meet the Enemy at Sea, the Convoy will get off, for want of Frigates. I submit this to you, to urge General Acton upon. If the Enemy have Malta, it is only as a safe harbour for their Fleet, and Sicily will fall the moment the King's Fleet withdraws from the Coast of Sicily; therefore we must have free use of Sicily, to enable us to starve the French in Malta. I need not say more on this very important subject. The King of Naples may now have part of the glory in destroying these pests of the human

race; and the opportunity, once lost, may never be regained. God bless you. Depend on my exertions.

I am, &c. HORATIO NELSON.

TO THE RIGHT HONORABLE SIR WILLIAM HAMILTON, K.B.

Vanguard, at Sea, 18th June, 1798

My dear Sir,

I would not lose one moment of the breeze, in answering your Letter. The best sight (as an Irishman would say) was to see me out of sight; especially, as I had not time to examine the Marquis de Gallo's note to you. I send you an extract of the Admiralty orders to Earl St. Vincent, by which it would appear as determined by the Cabinet, to keep a superior Fleet to the Enemy in the Mediterranean; for the Admiralty, you know, can give no such orders, but by an order from the Secretary of State. As for what depends on me, I beg, if you think it proper, to tell their Sicilian Majesties, and General Acton, that they may rest assured that I shall not withdraw the King's Fleet, but by positive orders, or the impossibility of procuring supplies. I wish them to depend upon me, and they shall not be disappointed. God forbid it should so happen, that the Enemy escape me, and get into any Port. You may rely if I am properly supplied, that there they shall remain, a useless body, for this summer. But, if I have Gun and Mortar Boats, with Fire-Ships, it is most probable they may be got at: for, although I hope the best, yet it is proper to be prepared for the worst, (which, I am sure, all this Fleet would feel,) the escape of the Enemy into Port. My distress for Frigates is extreme; but I cannot help myself, and no one will help me. But, thank God, I am not apt to feel difficulties. Pray, present my best respects to Lady Hamilton. Tell her, I hope to be presented to her crowned with laurel or cypress. But God is good, and to him do I commit myself and our Cause. Ever believe me, my dear Sir, your obliged and faithful

HORATIO NELSON.

TO THE MOST ILLUSTRIOUS THE GRAND MASTER OF MALTA,

His Britannic Majesty's Ship Vanguard, off Messina, 20th June, 1798.

Most Illustrious Sir,

It is with particular satisfaction I have the honour to acquaint you I am making; all possible dispatch with the Squadron of his Britannic Majesty under my command towards Malta, with a full determination to prevent your Island from falling into the hands of the common Enemy. I therefore trust you will be pleased to give directions to assemble all your Ships of

War, Fire-ships, bombs, Galleys, &c., immediately to form a speedy junction with me the moment I appear off Malta (which I expect will be on Friday next) for the better insurance of success, as no time must be lost in destroying the French Fleet. I have the honour to be, &c.,

HORATIO NELSON.

**TO HIS EXCELLENCY THE RIGHT HONOURABLE SIR WILLIAM
HAMILTON, K.B.**

Vanguard, off the Faro of Messina, June 20th, 1798.

My dear Sir,

I have thought so much, and heard so much, of the French, since I left Naples, that I should feel culpable, was I for a moment to delay expressing my sentiments on the present situation of the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies. I trust it will be received as I mean it—as a proof of the lively interest I take in the fate of their Sicilian Majesties. I shall begin by supposing myself commanding a Fleet attending an Army which is to invade Sicily. If the General asked if Malta would not be a most useful place for the depot of stores, &c., &c., my answer would be, if you can take Malta, it secures the safety of the Fleet, Transports, stores, &c., and insures your safe retreat should that be necessary; for if even a superior Fleet of the Enemy should arrive, before one week passes, they will be blown to leeward, and you may pass with safety. This would be my opinion. There can be no doubt but the French know as well as you and I do, that their Sicilian Majesties called for our help to save them, (even this is crime enough with the French.) Here we are, and are ready, and will shed our blood in preventing the French from ill-treating them. On the arrival of the King's Fleet I find plenty of good will towards us, with every hatred towards the French; but no assistance for us—no hostility to the French. On the contrary, the French Minister is allowed to send off Vessels to inform the Fleet of my arrival, force, and destination, that instead of my surprising them, they may be prepared for resistance. But this being past, I shall endeavour briefly to state what in my opinion is now best to be done, and what Naples ought to do, if it is earnestly wished to save Sicily. I shall suppose the French not advanced since the last accounts, but still on Gozo and Comino, the Fleet anchored between them. By the communication from Naples, they will be formed in the strongest position, with Batteries and Gun-boats to flank them. We shall doubtless injure them, lint our loss must be great; and I do not expect to force them from the anchorage, without Fire-ships, Bomb-vessels, and Gun-boats, when one hour would either destroy or drive them out. If our Fleet is crippled, the blockade ends; if not, it will be continued, by attention, and sending two Ships at a time to Sicily to get refreshments, for the summer, at least; but whenever this Fleet may be drawn away, and the Ministry find what has passed at Naples—no co-operation, although we are come to their assistance--who can say that the Fleet will be kept in these seas ? I have said and repeat it, Malta is the direct road to Sicily. It has been, and may be yet in the King of Naples' power, by giving me help of every kind,

directly to destroy this Armament, and force the Army to unconditional submission. Naples must soon find us masts, yards, stores, ammunition, &c., &c. Will not this be a declaration of War against the French ?—therefore why delay sending help, if it is only six Gun-boats at a time. But not a moment must be lost—it can never be regained. I recollect General Acton, in his letter to you calling for our help, says, will the King and Ministry wish to see these fine Countries in the hands of the French? The answer is, No; and we have sent the means of preventing it. It may now be asked—will the Ministry of their Sicilian Majesties permit these fine Countries to fall into the hands of the French? This will assuredly happen if they do not co-operate with us. If I have wrote my mind too freely, I trust it will be excused. The importance of the subject called for my opinion. I have given it like an honest man, and shall wish to stand or fall with it. I am, dear Sir, with the highest respect, &c.

HORATIO NELSON.

TO GEORGE BALDWIN, ESQ., CONSUL AT ALEXANDRIA.

June 24th, 1798.

Dear Sir,

I am so persuaded of the intention of the French to attempt driving us from India, in concert with Tippoo Saib, that I shall never feel secure till Mangalore, and all Tippoo's Sea Coast, is in our possession. We ought to get hold of the Coast, even at the certainty of a War with him. Had I been his Peace-Maker, he should have had my head before-Mangalore, or one foot of Coast. I send you some Reviews and Magazines—they may be pleasant, although old; and if I can get near you with the Fleet, and am favoured with five minutes' conversation, I shall have great pleasure in supplying you with anything in my power; for believe me, dear Sir, your most obedient servant,

HORATIO NELSON

Pray do not detain the Mutine, for I am in a fever at not finding the French. At Naples they have English news to the 16th of May. No fears of an Invasion: Pitt stronger than ever.

TO GEORGE BALDWIN, ESQ., CONSUL AT ALEXANDRIA.

Vanguard at Sea, 26th June, 1798.

Sir,

The French having possessed themselves of Malta, on Friday, the 15th of this month, the next day, the whole Fleet, consisting of sixteen Sail of the Line, Frigates, Bombvessels, &c., and near three hundred Transports, left the Island. I only heard this unpleasant news on the 22nd, off Cape Passaro. As Sicily was not their object, and the wind blew fresh from the westward, from the time they sailed, it was clear that their destination was to the eastward; and I think their object is, to possess themselves of some Port in Egypt, and to fix themselves at the head of the Red Sea, in order to get a formidable Army into India; and, in concert with Tippoo Saib, to drive us, if possible, from India. But I have reason to believe, from not seeing a Vessel, that they have heard of my coming up the Mediterranean, and are got safe into Corfu. But still I am most exceedingly anxious to know from you if any reports or preparations have been made in Egypt for them; or any Vessels prepared in the Red Sea, to carry them to India, where, from the prevailing winds at this season, they would soon arrive; or any other information you would be good enough to give me, I shall hold myself much obliged. I am, Sir, &c.,

HORATIO NELSON.

TO ADMIRAL THE EARL OF ST. VINCENT K.B.

Vanguard, at Sea, June 29th, 1798.

My Lord,

Although, I rest confident, that my intentions will always with you have the most favourable interpretations, yet where success does not crown an Officer's plan, it is absolutely necessary that he should explain the motives which actuate his conduct, and therefore, I shall state them as briefly as possible.

Captain Troubridge joined me on the 7th of June. From calms it was the 12th before I got round Cape Corse; (I must here state, that I had nothing in the shape of a Frigate except the Mutine Brig). I then sent the Mutine to look into Telamon Bay, which, as all the French troops had not left Genoa on the 6th, I thought a probable place for the rendezvous of a large Fleet, for, completely ignorant as I was of the destination of the Enemy, I felt it my duty to take every precaution not to pass them. On the 13th, the Mutine looked into Telamon Bay, but found nothing there. I ran the Fleet between Planosa, Elba, and Monte Christi, and on the 14th, at noon, was off Civita Vecchia, when we spoke a Tunisian cruiser,, who reported that he had spoken a Greek on the 10th, who told him that on the

4th, he had passed through the French Fleet off the N.W. end of Sicily, steering to the eastward. From this moment, I was in anxious expectation of meeting with Dispatch-boats, Neapolitan Cruisers, &c., with letters for me from Naples, giving me every information I could desire, (but my hopes were vain.) On the 15th, I made the Ponza Islands, where not finding; a Cruiser, I sent Captain Troubridge in the Mutine to talk with Sir William Hamilton and General Acton, and to state my distress for Frigates.

On the 17th, in the Bay of Naples, I received my first letter from Sir William Hamilton, and in two hours Captain Troubridge returned with information, that the French Fleet were off Malta on the 8th, going to attack it, that Naples was at Peace with the French Republic, therefore, could afford us no assistance in Ships, but that, unclear the rose, they would give us the use of their Ports, and sincerely wished us well, but did not give me the smallest information of what was, or likely to be, the future destination of the French armament. With this comfortable account, I pushed for the Faro [of] Messina. On my way I heard of the French landing in Malta, and that on Tuesday the 12th they had taken the old City: that the Fleet was anchored between Gozo and Malta. On the 20th, off Messina, the English Consul came on board to tell me that Malta had surrendered on the 15th, the Russian Minister having arrived the day before from Malta, when the intelligence came over, but I received not the smallest information or notice from the Sicilian Government. Keeping the Sicilian shore on board, on the 21st, I was close off Syracuse and hoisted our colours. A boat in the evening rowed out about a mile, but although I brought to and sent the Mutine in shore, she rowed back again. On the 22nd, in the morning, being off Cape Passaro, the Mutine spoke a Brig which sailed from Malta the day before. The Master reported that Malta surrendered on Friday the 15th of June, and that on Saturday, the 16th, the whole French Fleet left it, as was supposed, for Sicily: that a French garrison was left in the Town, and French colours flying. The wind at this time was blowing strong from the W.N.W. the Vessel had been spoken three hours before, and was gone out of my reach. I could not get to Malta till it moderated, and then I might get no better information. Thus situated I had to make use of my judgment. With information from Naples, that they were at peace with the French Republic, that General Buonaparte had sent on shore to Sicily, that the King of Naples need not be alarmed at the French armament, for it had not Sicily for its object. It was also certain the Sicilian Government were not alarmed or they would have sent off to me. I recalled all the circumstances of this Armament before me, 40,000 troops in 280 Transports, many hundred pieces of artillery, waggons, draught-horses, cavalry, artificers, naturalists, astronomers, mathematicians, &c. The first rendezvous in case of separation was Bastia, the second, Malta,— this Armament could not be necessary for taking possession of Malta. The Neapolitan Ministers considered Naples and Sicily as safe; Spain, after Malta, or indeed any place to the westward, I could not think their destination, for at this season the westerly winds so strongly prevail between Sicily and the Coast of Barbary, that I conceive it almost impossible to get a Fleet of Transports to the westward. It then became the serious question, where are they gone ? (Here I had deeply to regret my want of Frigates, and I desire it may be understood, that if one-half the Frigates your Lordship had ordered under my command had been with me, that I could not have wanted information of the French Fleet.) If to Corfu, in consequence of my approach (which they knew from Naples on the 12th or 13th) they were arrived by this time, the 22nd.

Upon their whole proceedings, together with such information as I have been able to collect, it appeared clear to me, that either they were destined to assist the rebel Pacha and to overthrow the present Government of Turkey, or to settle a Colony in Egypt, and to open a trade to India by way of the Red Sea; for, strange as it may appear at first sight, an enterprising Enemy, if they have the force or consent of the Pacha of Egypt, may with great ease get an Army to the Red Sea, and if they have concerted a plan with Tippoo Saib, to have vessels at Suez, three weeks, at this season, is a common passage to the Malabar Coast, when our India possessions would be in great danger.

I therefore determined, with the opinion of those Captains in whom I place great confidence*, to go to Alexandria, and if that place, or any other part of Egypt was their destination, I hoped to arrive time enough to frustrate their plans. The only objection I can fancy to be started is, you should not have gone such a long voyage without more certain information of the Enemy's destination' my answer is ready—who was I to get it from? The Governments of Naples and Sicily either knew not, or chose to keep me in ignorance. Was I to wait patiently till I heard certain accounts? If Egypt was their object, before I could hear of them they would have been in India. To do nothing, I felt, was disgraceful: therefore I made use of my understanding, and by it I ought to stand or fall. I am before your Lordship's judgement, (which in the present case I feel is the Tribunal of my Country,) and if, under all circumstances, it is decided that I am wrong, I ought, for the sake of our Country, to be superseded; for, at this moment, when I know the French are not in Alexandria, I hold the same opinion as off Cape Passaro—viz., that under all circumstances, I was right in steering for Alexandria, and by that opinion I must stand or fall. However erroneous my judgment may be, I feel conscious of my honest intentions, which I hope will bear me up under the greatest misfortune that could happen to me as an Officer—that of your Lordship's thinking me wrong. I have the honour to be, with the highest respect,

Your Lordship's most obedient Servant,

HORATIO NELSON*

TO ADMIRAL THE EARL OF ST. VINCENT, K.B.

Vanguard, 12 Leagues West of Candia, 12th July, 1798.

My Lord,

By my Letter of the 29th of June, your Lordship will know why I thought it right to steer for Alexandria. I have now the honour to acquaint you that I arrived off Alexandria on the 28th ultimo, and found lying there one Turkish Ship of the Line, four Frigates, about twelve other Turkish vessels in the old Port, and about fifty Sail of different Nations' vessels, in the Franks' Port. I directed Captain Hardy, of the Mutine, to run close in, and to send an Officer on shore with my letter to Mr. Baldwin, and to get all the information in

his power. Herewith I send you the Officer's report. Mr. Baldwin had left Alexandria near three months,. We observed the Line-of-Battle Ship to be landing her guns, and that the place was filling with armed people. After receiving this information, I stretched the Fleet over to the Coast of Asia, and have passed close to the southern side of Candia, but without seeing one Vessel in our route; therefore to this day I am without the smallest information of the French Fleet since their leaving Malta. I own I fully expected to have found Dispatches off this end of Candia; for both Sir William Hamilton and General Acton, I now know, said they believed Egypt was their object; for that when the French Minister at Naples was pressed, on the Armament appearing off Sicily, he declared that Egypt was their object. I have again to deeply regret my want of frigates, to which I shall ever attribute my ignorance of the situation of the French fleet. I shall endeavour to keep in the opening of the Archipelago in Lat. between 36° and 37° N., steering with all sail to the westward, and hope soon to gain information from some Merchant-vessel. I have the honour to be, &c.,

HORATIO NELSON.

TO HIS EXCELLENCY SIR WILLIAM HAMILTON, K.B. NAPLES.

Vanguard, Syracuse, July 20th, 1798.

My dear Sir,

It is an old saying, 'the Devil's children have the Devil's luck.' I cannot find, or to this moment learn, beyond vague conjecture where the French Fleet are gone to. All my ill fortune, hitherto, has proceeded from want of Frigates. Off Cape Passaro, on the 22nd of June, at day-light, I saw two Frigates, which were supposed to be French, and it has been said since that a Line of Battle Ship was to leeward of them, with the riches of Malta on board, but it was the destruction of the Enemy, not riches for myself, that I was seeking. These would have fallen to me if I had had Frigates, but except the Ship of the Line, I regard not all the riches in this world. From every information off Malta I believed they were gone to Egypt. Therefore, on the 28th, I was communicating with Alexandria in Egypt, where I found the Turks preparing to resist them, but know nothing beyond report. From thence I stretched over to the Coast of Caramania, where not meeting a Vessel that could give me information, I became distressed for the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies, and having gone a round of 600 leagues at this season of the year (with a single Ship [*or; "with a crippled ship"*]) with an expedition incredible, here I am as ignorant of the situation of the Enemy as I was twenty-seven days ago. I sincerely hope, that the Dispatches which I understand are at Cape Passaro, will give me full information. I shall be able for nine or ten weeks longer to keep the Fleet on active service, when we shall want provisions and stores. I send a paper on that subject herewith. Mr. Littledale is, I suppose, sent up by the Admiral to victual us, and I hope he will do it cheaper than any other person; but if I find out that he charges more than the fair price, and has not the provisions of the very best quality, I will not take them; for, as no Fleet has more fag than this, nothing but the best food and

greatest attention can keep them healthy. At this moment, we have not one sick man in the Fleet. In about six days I shall sail from hence, and if I hear nothing more from the French, I shall go to the Archipelago, where if they are gone towards Constantinople I shall hear of them. I shall go to Cyprus, and if they are gone to Alexandretta, or any other part of Syria or Egypt, I shall get information. You will, I am sure, and so will our Country, easily conceive what has passed in my anxious mind, but I have this comfort, that I have no fault to accuse myself of. This bears me up, and this only. I send you a Paper, in which a letter is fixed for different places, which I may leave at any place, and except those who have the key, none can tell where I am gone to.

July 21st.—The Messenger has returned from Cape Passaro, and says, that your letters for me are returned to Naples. What a situation am I placed in! As yet, I can learn nothing of the Enemy; therefore I have no conjecture but that they are gone to Syria, and at Cyprus I hope to hear of them. If they are gone to the westward, I rely that every place in Sicily would have information for us, for it is news too important to leave me one moment in doubt about. I have no frigate, nor a sign of one. The masts, yards, &c. for the Vanguard will, I hope, be prepared directly; for should the French be so strongly secured in Port that I cannot get at them, I shall immediately shift my Flag into some other Ship, and send the Vanguard to Naples to be refitted; for hardly any other person but myself would have continued on service so long in such a wretched state. [*A storm on the 21st of May left Vanguard with a Jury Foremast*] I want to send a great number of Papers to Lord St. Vincent, but I dare not trust any person here to carry them even to Naples. Pray send a copy of my letter to Lord Spencer. He must be very anxious to hear of this Fleet. I have taken the liberty to trouble your Excellency with a letter for Lady Nelson. Pray forward it for me, and believe me, with the greatest respect, your most obedient Servant,

HORATIO NELSON.

TO LADY NELSON.

Syracuse, July 20th, 1798.

I have not been able to find the French Fleet, to my great mortification, or the event I can scarcely doubt. We have been off Malta, to Alexandria in Egypt, Syria, into Asia, and are returned here without success: however, no person will say that it has been for want of activity. I yet live in hopes of meeting these fellows; but it would have been my delight to have tried Buonaparte on a wind, for he commands the Fleet, as well as the Army. Glory is my object, and that alone. God Almighty bless you.

HORATIO NELSON.

TO ADMIRAL, THE EARL OF ST. VINCENT, K.B.

Vanguard, Syracuse, 20th July, 1798.

My Lord,

From my letter of the 12th, you will be informed of my conduct to that time. I have now to acquaint you that having spoke several vessels from the westward, and one from Corfu, I know, as far as their reports, that the French are neither to the Westward of Sicily nor at Corfu. Yesterday I arrived here, where I can learn no more than vague conjecture that the French are gone to the eastward. Every moment I have to regret the frigates having left me, to which must be attributed my ignorance of the movements of the Enemy. Your Lordship deprived yourself of Frigates to make mine certainly the first Squadron in the world, and I feel that I have zeal and activity to do credit to your appointment, and yet to be unsuccessful hurts me most sensibly. But if they are above water, I will find them out, and if possible bring them to Battle. You have done your part in giving me so fine a Fleet, and I hope to do mine in making use of them. We are watering, and getting such refreshments as the place affords, and shall get to sea by the 25th. It is my intention to get into the Mouth of the Archipelago, where, if the Enemy are gone towards Constantinople, we shall hear of them directly: if I get no information there, to go to Cyprus, when, if they are in Syria or Egypt, I must hear of them. Seventeen Sail of the Line, eight Frigates, &c. of War, went from Malta with them. We have a report that on the 1st of July, the French were seen off Candia, but near what part of the Island I cannot learn. I have the honour to remain, &c.

HORATIO NELSON.

TO THE COMMANDERS OF ANY OF HIS MAJESTY'S SHIPS,

Vanguard, Syracuse, 22nd July, 1798.

Sir,

Resting with the greatest confidence that had the French Fleet proceeded to the westward from Malta, that his Majesty's Minister at Naples would have taken care to have lodged information for me in every Port in Sicily, knowing I was gone to the eastward, I now acquaint you that I shall steer direct for the Island of Cyprus, and hope in Syria to find the French Fleet. I am, &c.

HORATIO NELSON.

Having received some vague information of the Enemy, I shall steer to the north of Candia, and probably send a Ship to Milo, and if the Enemy are not in those seas, I shall pass on for Cyprus, Syria, and Egypt.

TO THE RIGHT HON. SIR WILLIAM HAMILTON, K.B.

Vanguard, Syracuse, July 22, 1798.

My dear Sir,

I have had so much said about the King of Naples, orders only to admit three or four of the Ships of our Fleet into his Ports, that I am astonished. I understood that private orders, at least, would have been given for our free admission. If we are to be refused supplies, pray send me by many Vessels an account, that I may in good time take the King's Fleet to Gibraltar. Our treatment is scandalous for a great Nation to put up with, and the King's Flag is insulted at every Friendly Port we look at. I am, with the greatest respect, &c.,

HORATIO NELSON.

You will observe that I feel as a Public man, and write as such. I have no complaint to make of private attention, quite the contrary. Every body of persons have been on board to offer me civilities.

TO SIR WILLIAM AND LADY HAMILTON.

22nd July, 1798.

My dear Friends,

Thanks to your exertions, we have victualled and watered: and surely watering at the Fountain of Arethusa, we must have victory. We shall sail with the first breeze, and be assured I will return either crowned with laurel, or covered with cypress.

TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE SIR WILLIAM HAMILTON, K.B.

Vanguard, Syracuse, 23rd July, 1798.

My dear Sir,

The Fleet is unmoored, and the moment the wind comes off the land, shall go out of this delightful harbour, where our present wants have been most amply supplied, and where every attention has been paid to us; but I have been tormented by no private orders being given to the Governor for our admission. I have only to hope that I shall still find the French Fleet, and be able to get at them: the event then will be in the hands of Providence,

of whose goodness none can doubt. I beg my best respects to Lady Hamilton, and believe me ever your faithful

HORATIO NELSON.

No Frigates! — to which has been, and may again, be attributed the loss of the French Fleet.

TO ADMIRAL THE EARL OF ST. VINCENT, K.B., COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF.

Vanguard, off the Mouth of the Nile, 3rd August, 1798.

My Lord,

Almighty God has blessed his Majesty's Arms in the late Battle, by a great Victory over the Fleet of the Enemy, who I attacked at sunset on the 1st of August, off the Mouth of the Nile. The Enemy were moored in a strong Line of Battle for defending the entrance of the Bay, (of Shoals,) flanked by numerous Gun-boats, four Frigates, and a Battery of Guns and Mortars on an Island in their Van; but nothing could withstand the Squadron your Lordship did me the honour to place under my command. Their high state of discipline is well known to you, and with the judgment of the Captains, together with their valour, and that of the Officers and Men of every description, it was absolutely irresistible. Could anything from my pen add to the character of the Captains, I would write it with pleasure, but that is impossible.

I have to regret the loss of Captain Westcott of the Majestic, who was killed early in the Action; but the Ship was continued to be so well fought by her First Lieutenant, Mr. Cuthbert, that I have given him an order to command her till your Lordship's pleasure is known.

The Ships of the Enemy, all but their two rear Ships, are nearly dismasted: and those two, with two Frigates, I am sorry to say, made their escape; nor was it, I assure you, in my power to prevent them. Captain Hood most handsomely endeavoured to do it, but I had no Ship in a condition to support the Zealous, and I was obliged to call her in.

The support and assistance I have received from Captain Berry cannot be sufficiently expressed. I was wounded in the head, and obliged to be carried off the deck; but the service suffered no loss by that event: Captain Berry was fully equal to the important service then going on, and to him I must beg leave to refer you for every information relative to this Victory. He will present you with the Flag of the Second in Command, that of the Commander-in-Chief being burnt in L'Orient.

Herewith I transmit you Lists of the Killed and Wounded, and the Lines of Battle of ourselves and the French. I have the honour to be, my Lord, your Lordship's

most obedient Servant,

HORATIO NELSON.

Line of Battle

1.	Culloden	T.Troubridge, Captain	74 Guns	590 Men
2.	Theseus	R.W. Miller, Captain	74 Guns	590 Men
3.	Alexander	Alex. John Ball, Captain	74 Guns	590 Men
4.	Vanguard	Rear-Admiral Sir Horatio Nelson, K.B., Edward Berry, Captain	74 Guns	696 Men
5.	Minotaur	Thomas Louis, Captain	74 Guns	640 Men
6.	Leander	Thomas B. Thompson, Captain	50 Guns	343 Men
7.	Swiftsure	B. Hallowell, Captain	74 Guns	590 Men
8.	Audacious	Davidge Gould, Captain	74 Guns	590 Men
9.	Defence	John Peyton, Captain	74 Guns	590 Men
10	Zealous	Samuel Hood, Captain	74 Guns	590 Men
11.	Orion	Sir James Saumarez, Captain	74 Guns	590 Men
12.	Goliath	Thomas Foley, Captain	74 Guns	590 Men
13.	Majestic	George B. Westcott, Captain	74 Guns	590 Men
14.	Bellerophon	Henry D'E. Darby, Captain	74 Guns	590 Men

	La Mutine, Brig.			
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HORATIO NELSON

French Line of Battle

1.	Le Guerrier	74 Guns	700 Men	Taken
2.	Le Conquérant	74 Guns	700 Men	Taken
3.	Le Spartiate	74 Guns	700 Men	Taken
4.	L'Aiglon	74 Guns	700 Men	Taken
5.	Le Souverain Peuple	74 Guns	700 Men	Taken
6.	Le Franklin, Blanquet, First Contre Amiral	80 Guns	800 Men	Taken
7.	L'Orient, Brueys, Admiral and Commander-in-Chief	120 Guns	1010 Men	Burnt
8.	Le Tonnant	80 Guns	800 Men	Taken
9.	L'Heureux	74 Guns	700 Men	Taken
10.	Le Timoleon	74 Guns	700 Men	Burnt
11.	Le Mercure	74 Guns	700 Men	Taken
12.	Le Guillaume Tell, Villeneuve, Second Contre Amiral	80 Guns	800 Men	Escaped
13.	Le Généreux	74 Guns	700 Men	Escaped
14.	La Diane	48	300	Escaped

		Guns	Men	
15.	La Justice	44 Guns	300 men	Escaped
16.	L'Artemise	36 Guns	250 Men	Burnt
17.	La Sèrieuse	36 Guns	250 Men	Dismasted and Sunk

HORATIO NELSON - Vanguard, off the Mouth of the Nile, 3rd August, 1798

A RETURN OF THE KILLED AND WOUNDED IN HIS MAJESTY'S SHIPS,
UNDER THE COMMAND OF SIR HORATIO NELSON, K.B., REAR-
ADMIRAL OF THE BLUE, ETC. IN ACTION WITH THE FRENCH, AT
ANCHOR, ON THE 1ST OF AUGUST, 1798, OFF THE MOUTH OF THE
NILE.

Theseus.—5 Seamen killed; 1 Officer, 24 Seamen, 5 Marines wounded. —Total 35.

Alexander.—1 Officer, 13 Seamen killed; 5 Officers, 48 Seamen, 5 Marines ,
wounded.—Total 72.

Vanguard.—3 Officers, 20 Seamen, 7 Marines, killed; 7 Officers, 60 Seamen, 8
Marines, wounded.—Total 105.

Minotaur.—2 Officers, 18 Seamen, 3 Marines, killed, 4 Officers, 54 Seamen, 6
Marines, wounded.—Total 87.

Swiftsure.—7 Seamen killed; 1 Officer, 19 Seamen, 2 Marines, wounded.—
Total 29.

Audacious.—1 Seaman killed; 2 Officers, 31 Seamen, 2 Marines, wounded.—
Total 36.

Defence.—3 Seamen, 1 Marine, killed; 9 Seamen, 2 Marines, wounded.—Total
15.

Zealous.—1 Seaman killed; 7 Seamen wounded.—Total 8.

Orion.—1 Officer, 11 Seamen, 1 Marine killed; 5 Officers, 18 Seamen, 6 Marines, wounded.—Total 42.

Goliath.—2 Officers, 12 Seamen, 7 Marines, killed; 4 Officers, 28 Seamen, 9 Marines, wounded.—Total 62.

Majestic.—3 Officers, 33 Seamen, 14 Marines, killed; 3 Officers, 124 Seamen, 16 Marines, wounded.—Total 193.

Bellerophon.—4 Officers, 32 Seamen, 13 Marines, killed; 5 Officers, 126 Seamen, 17 Marines, wounded.—Total 197.

Leander.—14 Seamen wounded.

Total.—16 Officers, 156 Seamen, 46 Marines, killed; 37 Officers, 562 Seamen, 78 Marines wounded.—Total, 895.

OFFICERS KILLED.

Vanguard.—Captain William Faddy, Marines; Mr. Thomas Seymour, Mr. John G. Taylor, Midshipmen.

Alexander.—Mr. John Collins, Lieutenant.

Orion.—Mr. Baird, Captain's Clerk.

Goliath.—Mr. William Davies, Master's Mate; Mr. Andrew Brown, Midshipman.

Majestic.—George B. Westcott, Esq. Captain; Mr. Zebedee Ford, Midshipman; Mr. Andrew Gilmour, Boatswain.

Bellerophon.—Mr. Robert Savage Daniel, Mr. Philip Watson Launder, Mr. George Joliffe, Lieutenants; Mr. Thomas Ellison, Master's Mate.

Minotaur.—Lieutenant John S. Kirchner, Marines; Mr. Peter Walters, Master's Mate.

OFFICERS WOUNDED.

Vanguard.—Mr. Nathaniel Vassal, Mr. John M. Adye, Lieutenants; Mr. John Campbell, Admiral's Secretary; Mr. Michael Austin, Boatswain; Mr. John Weatherstone, Mr. George Antrim, Midshipmen.

Theseus.—Lieutenant Hawkins.

Alexander.—Alexander J. Ball, Esq., Captain; Captain J. Cresswell, Marines; Mr. William Lawson, Master; Mr. George Bulley, Mr. Luke Anderson, Midshipmen.

Audacious.—Mr. John Jeans, Lieutenant; Mr. Christopher Font, Gunner.

Orion.—Sir James Saumarez, Captain; Mr. Peter Sadler, Boatswain; Mr. Philip Richardson, Mr. Charles Miell, Mr. Lanfesty, Midshipmen.

Goliath.—Mr. William Wilkinson, Lieutenant; Mr. Lawrence Graves, Midshipman; Mr. Peter Strachan, Schoolmaster; Mr. James Payne, Midshipman.

Majestic.—Mr. Charles Seward, Mr. Charles Royle, Midshipmen; Mr. Robert Overton, Captain's Clerk.

Bellerophon.—H. D'E. Darby, Esq., Captain; Mr. Edward Kirby, Master; Captain John Hopkins, Marines; Mr. Chapman, Boatswain; Mr. Nicholas Bettson, Midshipman.

Minotaur.—Mr. Thomas Irwin, Lieutenant; Mr. John Jewell, Lieutenant Marines; Mr. Thomas Foxten, 2nd Master; Mr. Martin Wills, Midshipman.

Swiftsure.—Mr. William Smith, Midshipman.

HORATIO NELSON.

TO THE RIGHT

Vanguard, Month of the Nile, 8th August, 1798.

My dear Sir,

Almighty God has made me the happy instrument in destroying the Enemy's Fleet, which I hope will be a blessing to Europe. You will have the goodness to communicate this happy event to all the Courts in Italy, for my head is so indifferent that I can scarcely scrawl this letter. Captain Capel, who is charged with my Dispatches for England, will give you every information. Pray put him in the quickest mode of getting home. You will not send by post any particulars of this Action, as I should be sorry to have any accounts get home before my Dispatches. I hope there will be no difficulty in our getting refitted at Naples. Culloden must be instantly hove down, and Vanguard all new masts and bowsprit. Not more than

four or five Sail of the Line will probably come to Naples; the rest will go with the Prizes to Gibraltar. As this Army never will return, I hope to hear the Emperor has regained the whole of Italy. With every good wish, believe me, dear Sir,

Your most obliged and affectionate,

HORATIO NELSON

9th August.—I have intercepted all Buonaparte's Dispatches, going to France. This Army is in a scrape, and will not get out of it.

TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE THE LORD MAYOR OF LONDON.

Vanguard, Mouth of the Nile, 8th August, 1798.

My Lord,

Having the honour of being a Freeman of the City of London, I take the liberty of sending to your Lordship, the Sword of the Commanding, French Admiral, Monsieur Blanquet, who survived after the Battle of the first, off the Nile; and request, that the City of London will honour me by the acceptance of it, as a remembrance, that Britannia still rules the Waves, which, that She may for ever do, is the fervent prayer of your Lordship's most obedient Servant,

HORATIO NELSON.

TO HIS EXCELLENCY THE GOVERNOR OF BOMBAY.

[Letter Book.]

Vanguard, Mouth of the Nile, 9th August, 1798.

Sir,

Although I hope the Consuls who are, or ought to be resident in Egypt, have sent you an express of the situation of affairs here, yet, as I know Mr. Baldwin has some months left Alexandria, it is possible you may not be regularly informed. I shall, therefore, relate to you, briefly, that a French Army of 40,000 men in 300 Transports, with 13 Sail of the Line, 11 Frigates, Bomb Vessels, Gun-boats, &c. arrived at Alexandria on the 1st of July: on the 7th, they left it for Cairo, where they arrived on the 22nd. During their march they had some actions with the Mamelukes, which the French call great victories. As I have Buonaparte's dispatches before me, (which I took yesterday,) I speak positively: he says, 'I

am now going to send off to take Suez and Damietta;' he does not speak very favourably of either the Country or people: but there is so much bombast in his letters, that it is difficult to get near the truth; but he does not mention India in these dispatches. He is what is called organizing the Country, but you may be assured is master only of what his Army covers.

From all the inquiries which I have been able to make, I cannot learn that any French Vessels are at Suez, to carry any part of this Army to India. Bombay, if they can get there, I know is their first object; but, I trust, Almighty God will in Egypt overthrow these pests of the human race. It has been in my power to prevent 12,000 men from leaving Genoa, and also to take eleven Sail of the Line, and two Frigates; in short, only two Sail of the Line and two Frigates have escaped me. This glorious Battle was fought at the Mouth of the Nile, at anchor: it began at sunset, August the 1st, and was not finished at three the next morning; it has been severe, but God blessed our endeavours with a great victory. I am now at anchor between Alexandria and Rosetta, to prevent their communication by water, and nothing under a Regiment can pass by land. But I should have informed you, that the French have 4000 men posted at Rosetta to keep open the Mouth of the Nile. Alexandria, both Town and Shipping, are so distressed for provisions, which they can only get from the Nile by water, that I cannot guess the good success which may attend my holding our present position, for Buonaparte writes his distress for stores, artillery, things for their hospital, &c. All useful communication is at an end between Alexandria and Cairo: you may be assured I shall remain here as long as possible. Buonaparte had never yet to contend with an English Officer; and I shall endeavour to make him respect us. This is all I have to communicate. I am confident every precaution will be taken to prevent, in future, any Vessels going to, Suez, which may be able to carry troops to India. If my letter is not so correct as might be expected, I trust for Your excuse, when I tell you that my brain is so shook with the wounds in my head, that I am sensible I am not always so clear as could be wished; but whilst a ray of reason remains, my heart and my head shall ever be exerted for the benefit of our King and Country.

I have the honour to be, &c.

HORATIO NELSON.

The Officer, Lieutenant Duval, who carries this Dispatch voluntarily to you, will, I trust, be immediately sent to England, with such recommendations as his conduct will deserve.

TO LIEUTENANT DUVAL.

Vanguard, in the Road of Bequier, at the Mouth of the Nile, 9th August, 1798.

Sir,

You are hereby required, and directed to proceed with the Dispatches you will herewith receive, in the Vessel that will be appointed for you, to Alexandretta, in the Gulf of

Scandaroon, and having furnished yourself with every information from the Consul, Vice-Consul, or, in their absence, any British Merchants at that place, you will lose no time in proceeding to Bombay by the shortest and most expeditious route, that may be pointed out by the before-mentioned gentlemen, delivering the said Dispatches to His Excellency the Governor of Bombay, on your arrival there. You will, on your arrival at Alexandretta, direct Mr. ---- to proceed with the Vessel under his command, with all possible expedition to Syracuse, but should you think it probably the Vessel will have a difficulty in returning to that place, you will request the Consul or Vice-Consul at Alexandretta, to obtain for the Midshipmen and people a passage to Naples or Messina in any Neutral Vessel bound that way, and sell the Vessel to the best advantage.

HORATIO NELSON.

TO LIEUTENANT DUVAL.

Vanguard, in the Road of Bequier, at the Mouth of the Nile 9th August, 1798.

Sir,

You are hereby authorized to draw such Bills as you may find necessary from time to time, to provide you with money sufficient to defray all your expenses, in your route, &c., to Bombay, on the East India Company, to whom, I shall write by the earliest opportunity and acquaint them of these my instructions to you, that the Bills may be duly honoured.

HORATIO NELSON.

**TO HIS BRITANNIC MAJESTY'S CONSULS, VICE-CONSULS—AND
MERCHANTS IN THEIR ABSENCE.—AT ALEXANDRETTA, AND ONE OF THE
ABOVE AT ALEPPO.**

Vanguard, in the Road of Bequier, at the Mouth of the Nile, 9th August, 1798.

Sir,

Having occasion to forward with the utmost haste to India, Lieutenant Duval of the Navy, who will deliver you this, he being charged with Dispatches of the greatest consequence to our Possessions in that Country, I am to request you will be pleased to furnish him with everything that may be necessary to forward him as fast as possible, particularly with money of the Country, and letters of recommendation on the route; also, a proper person to go with him as is customary in cases of Officers and others going overland to India, and he will give you Bills on the East India Company. In doing this, you will not only be of infinite

service to our Country, particularly the East India Company, but greatly oblige, Sir, &c.

HORATIO NELSON.

TO EARL SPENCER.

My Lord, Mouth of the Nile, 9th August, 1798.

Was I to die this moment, 'Want of Frigates' would be found stamped on my heart. No words of mine can express what I have, and am suffering for want of them. Having only the Mutine Brig, I cannot yet send off Captain Capel, which I am very anxious to do; for as an accident may happen to Captain Berry, it is of some importance, I think, for your Lordship to be informed of our success as speedily as possible. If the King of Naples had joined us, nothing at this moment could prevent the destruction of the Store Ships, and all the Transports, in the Port of Alexandria; four Bomb-vessels would burn the whole in a few hours; but, as I have not means, I can only regret the circumstance.

I send you a packet of intercepted Letters, some of them of great importance; in particular, one from Buonaparte to his brother. He writes such a scrawl, no one not used to it can read; but luckily, we have got a man who has wrote in his Office, to decipher it. Buonaparte has differed with his Generals here; and he did want—and if I understand his meaning, does want, and will strive to be, the Washington of France. "Ma mère" is evidently meant "my Country.", But I beg pardon: all this is, I have no doubt, well known to Administration. I believe our victory will, in its consequence, destroy this Army; at least, my endeavours shall not be wanting. I shall remain here for some time. I have thought it right to send an Officer (by Alexandretta, Aleppo, and Bussarah) over-land to India, with an account of what I have gathered from these Dispatches; which I hope will be approved. I have sent a copy of my Letter to the Board of Control, that they may give the necessary directions for paying the Officer's bills. If it should have gone to the East India Company, I hope that Board will forward it. Ever believe me,

Your Lordship's most obliged, and obedient Servant,

HORATIO NELSON.

